

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PRAGUE 02466 180832Z

42

ACTION COME-00

INFO OCT-01 EUR-06 ISO-00 EB-11 DRC-01 RSC-01 /020 W

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R 180727Z OCT 73

FM AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5283

INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

UNCLAS PRAGUE 2466

DEPT PASS COMMERCE FOR BIC/OIM

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: BEXP, XH, SU, AU

SUBJ: AMERICAN APPAREL MANUFACTURERS ASSOCIATION TRADE MISSION

REF: PRAGUE 2330(NOTAL)

1. AAMA TRADE MISSION COMPLETED FOUR-DAY VISIT TO PRAGUE AND DEPARTED FOR MOSCOW ON OCTOBER 17. (PER REFTEL AND ALE-KAHANE MEMO DATED SEPTEMBER 11, EMBASSY HAD EXPECTED MISSION TO ARRIVE PRAGUE SUNDAY, OCTOBER 14, AND WAS THEREFORE SURPRISED WHEN NOTIFIED FROM AIRPORT OF MISSION'S ARRIVAL ON SATURDAY, OCTOBER 13.)

2. DURING PRAGUE STAY, MISSION MEMBERS MET WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF CZECHOSLOVAK FOREIGN TRADE CORPORATIONS, FASHION RESEARCH INSTITUTE, FASHION PRESS, RETAIL DISTRIBUTION NETWORK, AND INTERESTED MINISTRIES.

TURNOUT AT MISSION EXHIBIT WAS RESTRAINED, AND MISSION MEMBERS RECEIVED CLEAR MESSAGE THAT CZECHOSLOVAK INTEREST IN IMPORTATION OF AMERICAN APPAREL WAS LIKELY TO REMAIN VERY MODEST UNLESS AND UNTIL CZECHOSLOVAKIA RECEIVES MFN. CZECHOSLOVAK CONTACTS ALSO POINTED OUT THAT CZECHOSLOVAKIA IS EXPORTER OF CLOTHING AND THERE LITTLE PROSPECT OF ALLOCATION OF SIGNIFICANT AMOUNT OF HARD CURRENCY FOR PURCHASE OF AMERICAN APPAREL.

3. DESPITE THIS LESS THAN BRILLIANT

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PAGE 02 PRAGUE 02466 180832Z

PICTURE, MAJORITY OF MISSION MEMBERS REMAIN CAUTIOUSLY OPTIMISTIC OVER

PROSPECTS FOR DOING BUSINESS IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA IN NEXT FIVE YEARS, AND FOUR MEMBERS (MOST NOTABLY BLUE BELL AND WASHINGTON MANUFACTURING, BOTH OF WHOM HAVE PRIOR EXPERIENCE WITH CZECHOSLOVAK MARKET) BELIEVE THERE GOOD POSSIBILITY OF BUSINESS IN NEXT TWO YEARS.
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